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Washington, D.C. 20520

February 6, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. WILLIAM P. CLARK

THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject:

Nina Lagergren's Letter to President Reagan

Concerning Raoul Wallenberg

Nina Lagergren, sister of Raoul Wallenberg, wrote to President Reagan on October 13 with regard to the President's speech on October 5 when he signed into law the bill making Raoul Wallenberg an honorary American citizen. in December this letter was forwarded to our Embassy in Stockholm with instructions for a routine reply. Although our Embassy is prepared to respond on behalf of the Administration, it is the Department's view that -- even at this late date -- it would be most beneficial and appropriate if the reply to Mrs. Lagergren came from the White House.

The text of Mrs. Lagergren's note (attached at Tab B) refers to her attendance at the October 5 ceremony and her gratitude for the President's expression of great personal interest in the Wallenberg case. The Wallenberg case continues to generate interest on the part of the American public. It became embroiled in controversy in November when the Swedish Government rejected proposals that the stranded Soviet submarine not be released by Sweden until the Soviets produced Wallenberg or offered a full, satisfactory account of his fate. Congressman Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), sponsor of the Wallenberg honorary citizenship law, urged USG action at that time to convince Sweden not to release the submarine without resolution of the Wallenberg affair. There remains some support from the public and on the part of some members of Congress for the proposal that, even if Sweden is unwilling to do so, the USG should try to arrange a spy swap with the Soviets in order to free Wallenberg if he is still alive. Lagergren's letter addresses the question as to whether the President will try to arrange such an exchange.

Given the likelihood of continued public interest in and publicity for the Wallenberg case, we recommend a reply

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come from the White House. However, given the continuing pressure for action commitments which we cannot undertake (such as a spy swap), we further recommend that the response come from a senior White House staff member and not from the President. A suggested response is attached at Tab A. If approved, the signed response should be returned to the Department, which will forward it to our Embassy in Stockholm for delivery.

L. Paul Bremer, Jiff Executive Secretary

Attachments:
As stated.

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